



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8

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MAY 18 2009

Ref: EPR-N

Larry W. Sandoval, Jr.
District Ranger
Laramie Ranger District
Medicine Bow-Routt NF
2468 Jackson Street
Laramie, WY 82070

Re: Spruce Gulch Bark Beetle and
Fuels Reduction Project - FEIS
CEQ # 20090116

Dear Mr. Sandoval:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 8 has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Spruce Gulch Bark Beetle and Fuels Reduction Project, in accordance with EPA responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4231 and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.


The EPA appreciates the level of consideration given in responding to agency and public comments that were provided during the review of the Draft EIS. Particular attention was given to concerns surrounding the elimination of the "No Clearcutting" alternative, and additional information was included in the FEIS to provide a clearer explanation for that decision.

EPA also appreciates that supplemental information was included in Appendix B to further describe how adaptive management will be implemented, including clearer decision criteria regarding trigger points for applying silviculture options. However, EPA still believes that a more accurate range of projections should be provided when analyzing and disclosing resources and environmental impacts rather than the current assumption that all units with an adaptive management prescription would be clearcut, thus potentially overstating the effects. Finally, EPA continues to be concerned with potential impacts to water quality and wildlife habitat if clearcutting proves to be the silvicultural preference for this project.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the review of this project during the NEPA process. If you have any questions regarding EPA's input, please contact me at

303-312-6004, or Melanie Wasco of my staff at 303 312-6540. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Larry Svoboda".

Larry Svoboda
Director, NEPA Program
Ecosystems Protection and Remediation